

DD/S&T# 2279-72

3 August 1972

MEMORANDUM FOR: Deputy Director of Central Intelligence
Deputy Director for Intelligence
Deputy Director for Science & Technology
Director, Office of National Estimates

SUBJECT: Visit of Dr. Edward Teller, PFIAB Member

Attached for your information is a Memorandum for the
Record on the discussions with Dr. Teller on 2 August.

(Signed) Bronson Tweedy

Bronson Tweedy
D/DCI/IC

Attachment:
as stated, 1 copy

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3. Dr. Teller was primarily interested in SALT verification matters, and the Soviet strategic offense and defense capabilities to be included in NIEs for the period five years hence.

4. As an aside, Dr. Teller also commented on the use of American scientists as collectors. He considers it "wrong and foolish" to brief scientists on what kinds of information to seek prior to their attending conferences behind the Iron Curtain. He said that any good scientist will know what kind of questions to ask without being put at risk by classified briefings. Dr. Teller has no objection to debriefing a scientist after his return and he also considers that pre-briefings given to him with respect to government officials with whom he would have contact had proved helpful.

5. The questions and answers relating to SALT focused primarily on the verification problem. Dr. Teller considers that Articles 13 and 6 relating to the consultative commission will prove helpful providing the commission members are "honest skeptics" with imagination and a willingness to investigate.

6. Dr. Teller was concerned as to whether the intelligence community is giving sufficient attention to the possibility that the USSR would do things which were permissible under the wording of the SALT agreement but not within the SALT spirit. He speculated, for

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instance, that during the several weeks prior to initialing of the agreement and the three weeks between the signing and the deadline, the Soviets might have broken ground for enough missile sites to increase their inventory by 20 to 30 percent (another time he mentioned "200 or more") so that at the deadline date these sites were "under construction" and could legally be completed under SALT. He also expressed concern that the Soviet Union might build and stockpile large numbers of mobile radars (like the SQUARE PAIR) so that they would be available for deployment to convert the SA-5 to hard point defense ABM six months after the USSR might elect to disavow SALT as the treaty provisions allow.

7. Dr. Teller said he was not interested in being told about what U.S. intelligence now knows of Soviet weapons inventories, but was keenly interested in the "error bars" for future projections, since he generally felt that what the NIEs have listed as "high" estimates were really those which "probably would be exceeded". He accepts the present total of completed missile sites as correct to between one and three percent.

8. He stressed that the new NIEs should point out to the President the possibility that the Soviets might have markedly increased the number of missile sites under construction, might develop more mobile missile capability, might develop a laser defensive capability and might stockpile radars which could be rapidly deployed to give the SA-5 a hard point ABM defense capability.

9. It was obvious that Dr. Teller considers the wording of the SALT is sufficiently vague to enable the Soviets to improve their offensive and defensive capabilities markedly if they so choose. He emphasized that SALT wording must be viewed "legalistically" and if the intelligence community considers the USSR will not do the things which SALT will permit, the reasons for such a position should be clearly spelled out in the NIEs.

10. Dr. Teller expressed the belief that the probability that some presently identified sites are dummies is less than the probability that there are new sites under construction but not yet identified. He admitted, however, that the deception problem would be more serious if there was indication the Soviets could product Potemkin sites at something like 10 percent of the cost of a real site.

11. Referring to Soviet planning for large-scale civil defense evacuations, Dr. Teller expressed the "guess" that the Soviets would only test this plan once, and would "really mean it," for to conduct an evacuation merely as a peacetime test would only serve to alert the U.S. to countermeasures. He asked to be provided what unclassified data was available on Soviet civil defense planning, and also for an estimate of what the USSR is spending on civil defense.

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12. After Mr. Duckett joined the group at 1130, he responded to Dr. Teller's interest in activities of the SALT Verification Panel. Mr. Duckett stressed that the President had been briefed on various of the activities which the USSR might undertake to improve its military capabilities without actually "cheating" on the SALT provisions. These briefings had included discussion of the potential for stockpiling radars to give the SA-5 a hard point. ABM defense capability, about which Dr. Teller had expressed concern.

13. During the luncheon, Dr. Teller discussed at considerable length his belief that a 250-foot CEP for a MIRVed SS-9 type missile is achievable within the next few years, in contrast to the view being developed in the intelligence community that present techniques are not likely to improve this beyond 750 to 800 feet (.15 mile) over the next several years.

14. Dr. Teller's estimate is based in considerable part on his view of two factors:

a. Gravity variations in the launch area are the most important element of this influence on CEP error, and the Soviets can measure this for distances of 1,000 to 2,000 miles from their sites without worrying about the complexities of a worldwide gravity model.

b. The effect of gusty winds on missile trajectory can be quite simply handled by use of small sensing vanes.

15. He noted that MIT's Stark Draper considers a 100-foot CEP achievable.

16. Dr. Teller also expressed concern during the luncheon that the Soviets might well devote increased attention to mobile missile capabilities and to defensive use of lasers. He considers the USSR is well ahead of the U.S. with respect to lasers.

17. Mr. Duckett offered to provide Dr. Teller with a briefing on lasers, [REDACTED]

18. Dr. Teller also returned during the luncheon to the comments he had made earlier about Soviet interest in large-scale civil defense planning.

19. At the afternoon session, Dr. Teller was concerned primarily about what the NIEs on Soviet strategic offense and defense forces would project as maximum Soviet capabilities five years hence, assuming the USSR had not broken the SALT provisions but had aggressively pursued an active military R&D program which had paid off reasonably

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well. His line of question indicated he believed the NIEs should discuss the possibility of MIRVed ICBMs with a .05 mile (250 foot) target CEP, of the availability of large numbers of radars which, once deployed, would make the SA-5 an ABM for hard point defense, and of the likelihood that ASW capabilities "would be far from negligible."

20. He considered the combination of these three new capabilities - achievable without formally violating the SALT - would enable the Soviets to target U.S. Minutemen on a one-missile-per-silo basis, with at least a 90 percent probability of destruction, and would leave large numbers of missiles for airfields, cities and other targets. He based this on SS-9 type missiles with 12 to 20 MIRVs and perhaps SS-7Is with three MIRVs.

21. In Dr. Teller's view the probability of a good Soviet ASW capability within five years is "not far below 50 percent," depending in part on what the United States does. He considers current Soviet acoustic detection equipments "more or less on a par with those of the U.S.". He noted that submarine tracking is fairly easy in some areas and there are countermeasures for acoustic detection. Whether the Soviets would be willing to risk the development of these capabilities was discussed at some length.

22. Dr. Teller considered that if the Soviet leaders felt they had perhaps a 20 percent certainty of achieving what amounted to a first-strike capability against the United States and an ability to contain the crippled U.S. counterstrike with casualties on the order of four million, the Soviet leadership would be willing to proceed and could do so while technically observing the SALT agreement. Since he sees no real technical obstacles to Soviet achievement of the necessary capabilities, he several times stressed what he considered was a need to discuss this as a possible Soviet course of action in the NIEs. How the Soviets might use such power, he conceded, was "a different ball game," discussion of which might not belong in an intelligence estimate. When Mr. Huizenga commented that if the USSR had such a capability it would seek to exploit it only on a "minimum risk basis," Dr. Teller agreed, adding that "minimum risk might well argue for an attack."

23. Dr. Teller interrupted the conference before he had completed his questioning since he had an appointment at the Capitol concerning a proposal, in which he is involved, to use nuclear explosions to dig a deep canal across the Isthmus of Kra in Thailand. He suggested he might return on 8 or 9 August to continue the discussion since he would be in Washington to testify on SALT before the House Foreign Affairs Committee on 9 August.

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24. Dr. Teller indicated during the luncheon he intended to recommend acceptance of SALT but would stress four points:

a. The need for careful exploitation of Articles 13 and 6 relating to the Consultative Commission;

b. Close and complete cooperation with U.S. allies for joint defense;

c. Every possible encouragement for military research and development; and

d. Increased U.S. attention to civil defense planning.



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Chief, Product Review Group
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